(c) The process of regularization has been stayed as per the orders of Hon'ble Supreme Court. The Central Government has prayed for vacation of the stay.

Improvement in quality of water in India

3095. DR. M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the quality of water in India is among the worst in the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the main pollutants which are carried by Indian rivers; and

(d) the steps taken by Government to improve the quality of water in Indian rivers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) and (b) The water quality of rivers in India is determined through a set of parameters based on the designated-best-use of river stretches. Under the National Water Quality Monitoring Network, the Central Pollution Control Board has identified 71 polluted stretches on different rivers in the country based on the data of Biochemical Oxygen Demand (BOD), an indicator of organic pollution. No comparative study has, however, been made on the quality of water in India with that in the world.

(c) Rivers in India are polluted mainly due to the discharge of treated & untreated municipal and industrial wastewaters, resulting mainly in increased organic mater measured in terms of BOD and microbial pollution indicated by the coliform counts. Agricultural run off and other non-point sources of pollution like open defecation, run off from solid wastes dumps sites etc., also contribute to water quality deterioration through addition of nitrogen, phosphorus and other trace organic compounds.

(d) The pollution abatement for Indian rivers was initiated with the implementation of the Ganga Action Plan (GAP-I) in the year 1985. Under this plan, 259 projects were completed in 25 towns of Utter Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal. The second phase of Ganga Action Plan was taken up in stages from 1993 to 1996 and was later re-named as National River Conservation Plan (NRCP). Presenly, NRCP covers pollution

abatement works in 160 towns spread over 20 states and 34 rivers in the country. The plan involves implementation of pollution abatement works namely, interception & diversion of sewage, setting up of sewage treatment plants, low cost sanitation, crematoria and river front development. So far, a total of 2598 million liters per day of sewage treatment facility has been created under these plans to improve the water quality. The Industrial pollution under the Plan is tackled by the Central Pollution Control Board and its state counterparts through the implementation of legal provisions under the Water (Prevention & Pollution Control) Act, 1974 and Environment (Protection) Act, 1986.

Legal powers to Army to patrol the borders for wildlife trade

3096. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARATIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Board for Wildlife met under the Chairmanship of the Prime Minister to take up the issue of legal powers to the army to patrol the borders to stop the wildlife trade, an ecological task force battalion for sanctuaries and State boards for wildlife;

(b) if so, what were the other subject discussed and main decision arrived; and

(c) what steps are being taken to implement the decision taken in the meeting?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI NAMO NARAIN MEENA): (a) to (c) A meeting of the National Board for Wildlife was convened on 19th June, 2006 under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Prime Minister in which issue of conferring legal powers to the Field Commanders of the Armed Forces deployed in the border areas under the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1982 to ensure protection of flora and fauna, raising ecological task force Battalion for Sanctuaries and representation of Armed Forces in State Board for Wildlife were taken up. The other important agenda items discussed include action for protecting peacocks, action for protecting lions, conservation of India's Red Jungle Fowl, conservation of important wetlands, etc. Central Government is fully committed to implement the decision taken at the National Board for wildlife.